

## AMENDMENTS TO CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

### **Listing of Claims:**

1. (Canceled)

2. (Currently Amended) The A method as recited in claim 1 for forming a contact structure for a semiconductor device, said semiconductor device having a contact window defined in an oxide layer, and a plug filled in said contact window, said method comprising steps of:

removing some of said oxide layer to make the plug protrude;

oxidizing the exposed region of the protruding portion of the plug to form an oxidized portion;

removing the oxidized portion of the plug so as to decrease an area of the top surface of the plug[[,]]; further comprising a step of and

forming a first dielectric layer on the plug that has undergone said step of removing the oxidized portion, and on the oxide layer that has undergone said step of removing some of said oxide layer, wherein the upper surface of the plug that has undergone said step of removing the oxidized portion is exposed.

3. (Original) The method as recited in claim 2, further comprising a step of performing planarization after the first dielectric layer is formed.

4. (Canceled)

5. (Canceled)

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6. (Canceled)

7. (Canceled)

8. (Canceled)